



San Diego City Attorney

MICHAEL J. AGUIRRE

NEWS RELEASE

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CITY ATTORNEY TO DENY SETTLEMENT AWARD TO POLICE CANINE OFFICER WHOSE DOG DIED UNDER HIS CARE

San Diego, CA—San Diego City Attorney Michael Aguirre has decided to deny a \$50,000 settlement award to a San Diego Police Department officer whose canine partner died of heat stroke in the back of the officer's closed vehicle.

The settlement award was part of a successful lawsuit filed against the City of San Diego by three police officers who maintained that the extra pay they receive for handling police dogs should be included in their base compensation for the purposes of determining their retirement benefit.

The San Diego City Council approved payment of \$223,100 to attorney Michael Conger who represented the officers, and \$50,000 to Officer Paul Hubka whose dog Forrest died while in the care of Hubka on June 20, 2008.

"Conger can have his blood money, but for the life of me I cannot justify payment of \$50,000 to a police officer for care of an animal that he allowed to die under his protection," Aguirre said.

A County Department of Animal Services investigation found that Forrest, a 5-year-old Belgian Malinois, had been left in Officer Hubka's vehicle which was parked in the driveway of his Alpine home, with the windows rolled up for "possibly as long as seven hours."

Officer Hubka signed the settlement agreement with the City on the same day that Forrest died.

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